

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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Action

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Control: 1939
Rec'd: NOVEMBER 6, 1962
1:10 P.M.

IO
Info FROM: GENEVA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MB

SS TO: Secretary of State

REVIEWED BY *11/11/62* DATE *1/1/68*
CLASSIFIED BY *11/11/62* DECLASSIFY *1/1/68*
EXEMPTIONS *11/11/62* DECLASSIFY *1/1/68*
FOI, EO or PA exemptions

SR NO: 579, NOVEMBER 6.

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SAL ACTION DEPARTMENT 579, INFORMATION-USUN (252) TO: OADR
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FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE RED CROSS P.M. NOVEMBER 5:

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THE ICRC AND THE CUBAN QUESTION: ICRC PRESS, NOVEMBER 5, 1962 - MR. THANT, ACTING SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND OF THE SOVIET UNION, HAS REQUESTED THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS IN GENEVA FOR ITS ASSISTANCE BY VISITING VESSELS ON THE HIGH SEAS BOUND FOR CUBA. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE ICRC HAS BEEN ASSURED THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS THAT THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT WOULD ACCEPT SUCH A FORM OF CONTROL. THIS OPERATION WOULD BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE FOR ABOUT ONE MONTH AND WOULD BE ENTRUSTED TO SOME THIRTY INSPECTORS WHICH THE ICRC WOULD UNDERTAKE TO RECRUIT. THE ICRC OBSERVES THAT THIS IS A TASK OUTSIDE THE CONVENTIONAL AND TRADITIONAL SCOPE OF ITS HUMANITARIAN MISSION. HOWEVER, IN THE BEST INTEREST OF PEACE, RECOGNIZED BY THE LAST ASSEMBLIES OF THE RED CROSS AS BEING ONE OF THE ORGANIZATIONS PRINCIPLES OF ACTION, AND WITH THE DESIRE TO SPARE MANKIND SUFFERING WHICH IT HAS ATTEMPTED TO ALLEVIATE DURING THE COURSE OF INTERNATIONAL AND CIVIL WARS, THE ICRC WOULD CONSIDER LENDING ITS GOOD OFFICES TO THE UNITED NATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, IT WOULD BE UNABLE TO UNDERTAKE ANY ACTION WITHOUT THE FORMAL AGREEMENT OF THE THREE PARTIES CONCERNED. FURTHERMORE, THE ICRC COULD NOT ASSUME DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROPOSED OPERATION, WHICH WOULD REMAIN WITHIN THE COMPETENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE STATES CONCERNED. THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEES CONTRIBUTION WOULD CONSIST CHIEFLY IN RECRUITING PERSONNEL CHARGED WITH VISITING THE VESSELS.

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-2-579, NOVEMBER 6. FROM GENEVA

THE CARRYING OUT OF THIS CONTROL SHOULD CONFORM TO THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE RED CROSS. THE ICRC HAS REQUESTED ITS FORMER PRESIDENT, MR. PAUL RUEGGER, TO PROCEED TO NEW YORK TO MAKE CONTACT WITH AND OBTAIN INFORMATION FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS AS WELL AS THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATES CONCERNED. THE ICRC'S DEFINITE DECISION WILL DEPEND UPON THE RESULT OF THIS MISSION.

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